

Serial No. 10/825,332
Reply dated: June 13, 2008
Reply to Office Action Mailed: March 26, 2008
Attorney Docket No. 028972.53933US

REMARKS

Claims 10 and 19 have been amended. Claims 10-17 and 19 remain pending in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

Applicant's counsel wishes to thank Examiner McGraw and his supervisor for the courtesies extending during a telephone interview on June 3, 2008. The following records the substance of the interview.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indicated allowability of claims 11-13 and 15-17. As Applicants submit base claim 10 is also in condition for allowance, these claims have not been rewritten into independent form at this time.

In the Office Action, independent claims 10 and 19, along with dependent claim 14, were rejected as being anticipated by Obrecht (U.S. 4,082,324). In view of the clarifying amendments made with respect to claims 10 and 19, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

As discussed during the interview, claim 10 recites a spray head for a spraying tool in which each spray unit has an end and a plurality of passages for the media to be sprayed. Applicants have amended claim 10 to clarify that the

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coupling element, which is used to couple the ends of the modular spray units, includes a passage which communicates with at least one of the passages of a first spray unit and at least one of the passages of a second spray unit. The coupling element further includes a recess having a tapered surface into which the clamp engages to join the spray units together.

As can be seen, for example, in the exemplary embodiment of figure 3, coupling element 25 includes a passage 32 which communicates with the passage (17 or 19) in the spray units (16, 16a). This advantageously allows the media to be sprayed to pass from one spray unit 16 through the passage 32 into the other spray unit 16a, for example. At the same time, coupling unit 25 includes a recess having a tapered surface (27, 28) into which a clamp 30 engages to join the spray units together (16, 16a).

In contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, the coupling elements 54, 56 in Obrecht are merely used to hold the exterior ends of the manifold blocks together as can be seen in figure 1. For example, element 54 is arranged in the slots 50, 51 and then screwed, via screws 61 into the blocks. Clearly, Obrecht does not provide a coupling element having a passage that communicates with the passages of the manifold blocks. Accordingly, as discussed during the interview, Applicants submit claim 10 is patentable over Obrecht.

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Similarly, Applicants have amended independent method claim 19 to likewise clarify that the coupling element includes a passage in communication with the passages of the spray units that are joined together. Hence, this claim is also submitted to be patentable over Obrecht.

More broadly, as discussed during the interview, Obrecht simply discloses a connection arrangement for hydraulic manifold blocks. The passages in Obrecht are not for "media to be sprayed" as in the present invention, rather they are for a hydraulic fluid utilized to control hydraulic equipment. Clearly, therefore, Obrecht's passages are not passages for media to be sprayed. Indeed, spraying of the hydraulic fluid would essentially ruin the hydraulic system. Thus, it should be clear that Obrecht does not disclose a spray head for a spraying tool as is recited in Applicants' claim 10.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit claims 10-17 and 19 are now all in condition for allowance. An early notice to that affect is solicited.

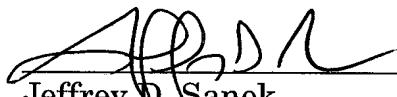
If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

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If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #028972.53933US).

Respectfully submitted,

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